April 3, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of the Nampa School District

What a week! We have learned so much. You have been such an incredible partner with us in this new journey. Thank you for walking with us and sharing your feedback. Thank you for working with your students in the numerous ways you have this week – finding quiet places for your children to work, learning new platforms and applications, getting connected, asking questions, connecting with teachers, and so much more.

As we predicted, not all was smooth (including an earthquake) and we are still working on a few kinks. However, overall, this has been an amazing first week of #NSDOnline.

Here are some of my favorite anecdotes (there have been many to choose from!):

1. An eighth-grade teacher opened a chat room on Tuesday evening after the earthquake for students to share and chat. What an amazing, relevant learning opportunity!
2. A mom sent me a picture of her daughter who was participating in a 15 minute “recess break” with 4 of her friends from school through Zoom.
3. We had a picture with almost 84,000 hits on Facebook of a South Middle School teacher practicing social distancing during a home visit with a student.
4. We have served over 10,000 meals to students this week – what an amazing nutrition services team we have. They are working on the front line to make sure our students have access to food. Next week, the lunch meals will come with a breakfast for the following day. Yes, a 2-for-1 deal for students in Nampa. Our lunch distribution locations and bus routes can be found online at https://bit.ly/2R8HZ3P.
5. We are responding to over 500 calls per day at our help desk. What an outstanding team of individuals who are working with parents, students and staff to ensure they have access to the internet and working devices. The help desk remains open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and has both English and Spanish language support. Need some assistance? Call 208-468-4777 or email helpdesk@nsd131.org.
6. We have one eighth-grade teacher who has successfully interacted with all but 7 of her 150 students this week! Zoom, teams, chats, class dojo, emails, texts, and more – NSD is working diligently to remain in contact with students and families. Learning continues!

There are a few areas where we are adjusting – this includes continuing to find connectivity options for all parents. Our parking lots have become hotspots for the internet and many families are taking advantage of this. We continue to work with families with other solutions for internet services. We are grateful for business and community partners who are working with us to find low-cost or no-cost ways of providing internet services. If you need assistance, call the help desk number listed above.

Many of our teachers are finding rhythm – balancing the work and learning shared with students, providing feedback, and staying connected with families. This is new to all of us and
your willingness to share your feedback in a constructive way helps us continue to be better each week!

Although it is not yet perfect, we are so blessed to have parents and community walking with us in this opportunity. We will continue next week to follow the governor’s directive to provide education and basic services to our community.

Please look for additional communication sometime next week. We are expecting additional guidance from the State Board of Education when they meet at 3 p.m. on Monday, April 6. After we figure out what that additional guidance means for NSD, we will communicate and share what we know.

Finally, I just wanted to recognize all the work and commitment on the part of NSD staff that this has taken to pull off. Everyone has had a role in this work. We are leading Idaho and our students are the beneficiaries of this work. One of the best parts of this work, however, has been our parents and community working with us. We are Nampa! We should be extremely proud of our community!

With respect,
Paula